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I N S I D E

Local

PBDC pursuing Midway airport, defense issues

The Pacific Basin Development Council is working with the Federal Aviation Administration in the deployment of at least a partial or "bare-boned" staffing to open up the Midway airport for emergency landings, Gov. Juan N. Babauta reported.

Babauta, the PBDC president, cited the organization's steadfast efforts to lobby for the reopening of the Midway airport as among the group's main agenda, in addition to homeland security and other regional issues.

"It [airport] was closed for a

while basically because of costs and because of hazards with respect to the birds there because the birds get into the engine of the aircraft. And basically just manning the whole place. There's hardly anybody there," explained Babauta.

The Midway Islands is described as an atoll in the northwestern part of the Hawaiian archipelago.

"I know that this is not a direct benefit [to the CNMI] but by the efforts of the PBDC, having Midway open as an emergency landing airport is a

PBDC effort...with the closure of Midway, we won't be able to land. If a commercial airplane needs to land, it won't be able to land anywhere and so it will crash in the ocean. And we have people aboard the plane, from the CNMI or Guam, obviously we're going to lose them," said Babauta.

Further, the chief executive noted that with the return of Hawaii as PBDC member, the organization can further pursue defense issues since Hawaii continues to play a central role in the defense posture of the Pacific.

"We don't necessarily bring home the bacon or money to the CNMI or to Guam per se but whatever Hawaii does also benefits us in a way that we can move the coast guard to our area for greater military presence, the monitoring of our EEZ and things like that," said Babauta.

The PBDC chief also disclosed plans to woo the state of Alaska as a fifth member, saying that the state's membership would only boost the group's standing as a regional organization.

Hawaii rejoined the group after about seven years of absence.

Babauta was recently in Ha-



Babauta.

waii to meet with Gov. Linda Lingle and American Samoa Gov. Togiola Tulafono to discuss PBDC and governing issues.

He touted the new partnership with Hawaii as one that would give the group a wider range of resources to push for issues that will benefit the whole region.

PBDC is in the meantime gearing up for its next meeting this February in Washington D.C. where homeland security issues, among others, will be a part of the agenda.

The group was established by the governors of American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii and CNMI in 1980 to address regional economic and social concerns. It has been based in Honolulu even during the years when Hawaii dropped out of it. *(Marian A. Maraya)*



STRESSING A POINT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Richard Pierce, right, makes a point during Wednesday's meeting between the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association and representatives from various government agencies. With him are from left, Dave Hodges and Brian Bearden of the Division of Environmental Quality, Manny Pangelinan, of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources and DEQ Deputy Director Pete Palacios.

Mificpa to hold US CPA review classes

The Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants is offering U.S. CPA review classes for Filipino accountants who are aspiring to be future U.S. CPAs.

Orientation will be held at the Philippine Overseas Labor Office, Philippine Consulate on Feb. 3, at 7pm. The orientation will discuss the implementation of the computer-based format of examination.

Under the computer-based format, examination will be

offered up to six days a week, during two out of every three months throughout the year. The first four testing windows are during the months of April-May, July-August, October-November, January-February.

The revised examination has four sections: Auditing and Attestation, Financial Accounting and Reporting, Regulation, and Business Environment and Concepts. The revised examination incorporates increased emphasis on information tech-

nology and general business knowledge with a broadened scope in the audit area. For more information, log on to www.cpa-exam.org.

Mificpa continues its commitment to help Filipino accountants achieve professional development. It invites Filipino accountants to join and be a member of the group for an annual membership fee of \$15. For inquiries, call Malou at 234-9696/234-2628 or Ia at 322-4501.

Mobil seeks OK to begin pipeline project on Tinian

Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc. has asked the Division of Environmental Quality to extend the expiration of a permit in connection with the company's Tinian pipeline project.

DEQ reportedly issued Mobil a commercial earthmoving and erosion control permit on Dec. 30, 2002, which expired exactly a year later.

"Due to issues beyond our control, the actual work was not able to proceed during the permitted period of 12 months," said Ivan C. Quinata, Mobil's engineering manager.

Mobil's consultant, Winzler & Kelly, also asked the Coastal Resources Management Office to allow the resumption of construction work. *(John Ravelo)*

Cab driver loses bag to burglars

Authorities are investigating a theft and burglary incident at the Coral Ocean Point after a taxi driver filed a formal complaint against unknown suspects who broke into his vehicle Tuesday afternoon.

DPS spokesperson Sgt. Tom Blas, Jr. said they received complaint around 12:34pm on January 27, wherein a taxi driver parked his car at the Coral Ocean Point to use a restroom and returned to a burglarized vehicle.

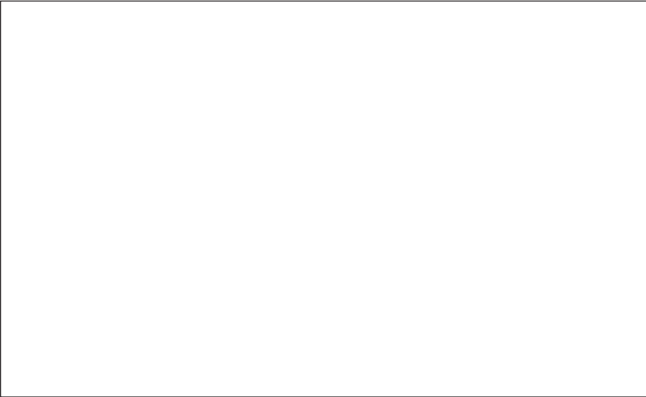
According to the complainant, he made a stop at the Coral Ocean Point Hotel beachside and parked his vehicle—a 2001 Toyota Echo with license plate TAXI1080—near the restroom area. He then went down to the beachside to fetch his wife, who would be following him at the COP. When he went back to the vehicle to get his cigarette, however, he found his car burglarized.

The complainant added that a black pouch bag containing

a bank book, his passport and \$200 cash was missing. The victim immediately called for police assistance. Responding law enforcers investigated the incident and checked on adjoining premises to question witnesses.


Blas urged the community or any individuals who may have information about the incident to call the Criminal Investigation Bureau at 664-9042 or the NMI Crime Stoppers tips line at 234-7272. *(Edith G. Alejandro)*

WEATHER FORECAST




PICTURE TIME: 2:25 A.M., DECEMBER 17, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


A monsoon trough extends from 6N130E through a tropical disturbance near 8N145E and finally to near 5N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the disturbance are found in the Mariana islands as well as between Yap and Chuuk or between 4N and 16N from 139E to 153E. Just east of the monsoon trough, a surface trough of low pressure continues to near the equator at 168E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are developing north and east of the trough or within 100 miles either side of a line from 9N160E to the equator at 173E, including Kosrae. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of the Marshall islands, between 4N and 16N from 170E to 180.




SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.




GUAM AND ROTA
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.




PALAU
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.




POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10 kt.




YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.






















KOSRAE
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.



CHUUK
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers with a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
 Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	26F (-3C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	72F (22C)
 London, England	Cloudy	56F (13C)	45F (7C)
 Los Angeles	Cloudy	69F (21C)	51F (11C)
 Manila	Cloudy	88F (31C)	71F (22C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	73F (23C)	54F (12C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	84F (29C)	75F (24C)
 New York, NY	Cloudy	52F (11C)	48F (9C)
 Osaka	Rain	54F (12C)	46F (8C)
 Paris	Cloudy	53F (12C)	41F (5C)
 Pusan	Rain	58F (14C)	43F (6C)
 Rome	Partly Cloudy	55F (13C)	39F (4C)
 Salem, Oregon	Rain	54F (12C)	38F (3C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	64F (18C)	47F (5C)
 Seoul	Rain	52F (11C)	45F (7C)
 Tokyo	Rain	55F (13C)	49F (9C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)

Guerrero: Yangetmai has the right to question Teacher Rep poll result

Board of Education member Herman Guerrero commented yesterday that Marianas High School teacher James Yangetmai has the prerogative to question the results of the recently concluded Teacher Representative election, which the Association of Commonwealth Teacher candidate lost to Kagman High School teacher



Guerrero

Ambrose Bennett. “Anyone [who] is running can always question [the election result]. I think they [administration] need to ensure whether he has valid points or not. If it’s not valid, then at least you settle the issue. And there’s no cloud hanging over the whole process. “It’s a democratic process. People who lose sometimes ask or think there are discrepancies or procedures [that were] not followed. If that is the case then the people that are conducting the election needs to refute them and say that this is what we did, and this the process and the procedures,” said the official, who recently lost the BOE chairmanship to Roman Benavente. Yangetmai, who lagged behind Bennett by 16 votes in Monday’s poll, hinted of possible vote manipulation, casting

doubts on the election’s credibility. ACT claimed the process was not valid and fair, as it allegedly lacked transparency. The group raised the absence of its own representative at the polling center. “I guess in any election, there’s a need to be clear on the process and procedures. If the one who lost is questioning the validity of the election then perhaps they need to revisit [the issue] and make sure there’s no doubt that what they certified is true and correct. The process has to be followed and it has to be transparent so nobody can question it,” insisted Guerrero, who called on House legislators yesterday. The BOE member representing Saipan was also curious over the dismal turnout in Monday’s election.

“When you only have 28 percent [of] eligible voters voting, that’s an extremely low turnout. With this kind of turnout, there’s no clear mandate from the teachers. So it’s questionable. One can raise the question why you don’t have many who voted? There’s a lot of questions why,” he asserted. Gov. Juan N. Babauta proclaimed Bennett’s victory on Tuesday, a day after the Teacher Representative poll was held here Monday and simultaneously on Rota and Tinian. The chief executive stressed that teacher representation in the BOE is constitutionally mandated. He said that concerns raised over the selection has prompted his office to hold the election so that all public school teachers in the CNMI could choose a representative that would truly represent them.

Babauta credited the Public School System, the BOE, the

PSS legal counsel, the Attorney General’s Office and the administration for putting together a fair and objective selection process. Of the 500 full-time teachers who were eligible to vote, Babauta confirmed that only 142 teachers or 28 percent cast their votes. He lamented the minimal participation. According to the breakdown, Yangetmai garnered 62 votes while Bennett gained 78 votes. Two ballots were reportedly cast without votes. Babauta explained that only full time teachers were eligible to vote in this election, quoting PSS’ definition of full time teachers as any person who is employed by the Public School System and has the primary responsibility for the education, instruction or provides related services for one or more students. *(Marian A. Maraya)*

Paras signs payment schedule with CHC

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Paras Enterprises president Juan T. Guerrero has signed a payment schedule agreement with the Department of Public Health only last week. Earlier, Paras legal counsel Mark Smith clarified that no agreement had been reached yet as of Jan. 8 as previously agreed by both parties. Guerrero said yesterday that Paras signed the payment schedule only last Jan. 14. On January 16, he said Paras received an additional \$100,000 payment from DPH. Based on the schedule, the department will give another payment of \$80,000 to Paras on Jan. 30 and some \$50,000 on Feb. 13. Guerrero said Paras and DPH continue to negotiate for the \$50,000 billing. “We have submitted our billing for \$50,000. I don’t know why they’re disputing our billing now when in the last six years,

they never did,” said Guerrero. He said Paras submitted \$248,000 billing to DPH as of Jan. 7, 2004. Based on the schedule, the DPH only acknowledged some \$230,000. “There is some flexibility but we’ll still pursue what is really due us,” said Guerrero, adding that the department itself is charging Paras some \$11,000 for outstanding hospital bills. This amount would be assessed against the last payment to Paras. “We’ll settle that but I’m not really sure how much we owe them so we have to discuss that,” he said. Guerrero also clarified that he has not signed any expiration transfer agreement with the department, which would “legalize” the transfer of Paras employees to the Commonwealth Health Center. Some authorities, however, said that a consensual transfer agreement with Paras is no longer needed

since its contracts with employees provide that their termination of employment goes with Paras’ contract termination with CHC. Both parties have agreed to finalize their payment schedule in view of the DPH’ shift to direct hiring of nursing staff effective Jan. 1, 2004. Paras and other agencies’ contracts with CHC ended on Dec. 31, 2003 but transfer negotiations dragged along pending the settlement of the government’s debt with the companies and the lack of funded FTEs or positions at the department. On Jan. 2, Finance released \$100,000 each to Paras and Saipan Employment Agency Services as partial payment. The government terminated its contracts with agencies on the belief that direct hiring would result in better delivery of health care and boost employee morale. The direct hiring aims to implement a uniform pay for all nursing staff.

DEQ heightens illegal dumping campaign

The Division of Environmental Quality warned that it would impose a fine on anyone caught illegally dumping trash on the islands. DEQ director John I. Castro Jr. urged the public to respect the no littering signs the agency has installed at beach parks and other areas. “We will assess a fine. Our regulations allow us to impose up to \$25,000 per day of violation,” Castro said. The DEQ hopes that the move will deter the public from illegally disposing of trash and household wastes. Castro said trash should be disposed of at the Lower Base

Refuse Transfer Station or the Marpi landfill. “Help us. It’s not just the DEQ’s job to keep Saipan beautiful but it’s also the public’s responsibility,” Castro added. The Environmental Inter-agency Cleanup Operation Team, of which DEQ is a member, and volunteers from non-profit group MOVER recently conducted an emergency cleanup in Garapan’s Makaka beach site, which had deteriorated due to illegal dumping. According to EICOT chairman Benny Pangelinan, people just ignored the DEQ’s no-littering sign at the site. *(John Ravelo)*

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Opinion

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EDITORIAL



3 men arrested for alleged assault

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Authorities arrested Monday night three men who have been a subject of intensive investigations by law enforcers since November 2003 when a 43-year-old man lodged a complaint against them.

Police department spokesperson Sgt. Tom Blas Jr. said Martin F. Borja, 38; Chris W. Taimanglo, 20; and William M. Faisao, 19, were arrested based on the arrest warrants issued against them by Judge Juan Lizama.

Blas said COPPS officers Jesse Seman and Sandy Hambros arrested the three suspects in connection with a Nov. 16, 2003, assault case lodged by Saburo Stewart, 43.

Lizama issued the warrants after the police released the results of its investigation on the case. The officers immediately served the warrants to the suspects. All three were brought to the Adult Correctional facility in Susupe where they were booked and detained pending bail hearing.

The investigation report showed that the police department received a call for assistance around 1:28am of Nov. 16, 2003, due to a disturbance in the house of Stewart in Kagman III area. Medics were also dispatched due to injuries sustained by the victim.

According to the report, the victim and two of the three suspects were involved in a fight outside the victim's house. During the squabble, the suspects used rocks, a machete, and a baseball bat to allegedly attack the victim, causing serious injuries.

Stewart reportedly sustained lacerations on the back, legs, and arms, as well as other cuts and bruises on his body.

After the investigation, probers determined the culpability of the three suspects and asked that arrest warrants be issued against them.

The suspects are now facing disturbing the peace, assault and battery, assault with dangerous weapons, and criminal mischief charges.

Taiwanese boat seized off New Caledonia

A Taiwanese fishing boat has been intercepted south of New Caledonia for fishing illegally.

The French high commission in the New Caledonia capitol of Noumea says the ship had been spotted by a French surveillance aircraft and an inspection showed it carried dozens of tons of fresh and frozen fish.

The interception comes just days after the captain of another Taiwanese fishing boat was jailed for six months and fined almost US\$200,000 for fishing illegally. (RNZI/PIR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION

Saipan Southern High School students gather around Gov. Juan N. Babauta during the chief executive's recent visit at the campus, in line with the administration's education program. Babauta has been putting emphasis on public education as an important tool in the eventual recovery of the local economy.

MPLA board in limbo due to lack of quorum

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The lack of a quorum on the Board of Directors of the Marianas Public Lands Authority is stymieing efforts to move ahead on critical projects, including 36 new offers for land compensation that require the board's approval.

Only two members remain on the Board—chairperson, Ana Demapan-Castro and vice chairman Manny Villagomez—following the resignation of a member and term expiration of another.

Member Pedro M. Atalig resigned from the board effective Jan. 1, 2004, while member

Pedro Igitol's term expired on Dec. 31, 2003.

The board is composed of five seats, with one representative each from Tinian and Rota and three from Saipan. The CNMI Constitution also provides that one of the directors should be of Carolinian descent, while another should represent women.

At the moment, Demapan-Castro represents Saipan and the women's sector, while Villagomez represents Tinian. This means nobody is representing Rota, the Carolinians, and two seats for Saipan.

This, even as the MPLA has already readied 36 new offers for land compensation that re-

quire the board's approval.

"We have to get the board's approval before we can make the offer but the board can't possibly meet right now for lack of quorum," said MPLA commissioner Henry S. Hofschneider.

The board normally holds a regular meeting on the third Thursday of the month.

Hofschneider said that some names have been floated for appointment by the governor to the board. He declined to identify them.

Meantime, he said that 38 landowners have accepted the MPLA's initial offers and are like likely to get their compensation within the month.

"Once Finance puts the

money in MPLA's special account, we can start cutting checks," he said.

Hofschneider said that MPLA is offering "just and fair" compensation to landowners.

The MPLA board approved 75 folders for immediate land compensation last month. This came soon after the CNMI government floated a \$40-million bond, with the proceeds to be used primarily to settle the longstanding land claims by individuals against the government. The first batch of claims included acquisition of rights-of-way.

The Land Compensation Act mandates the government to prioritize the payment for lands used for rights-of-way,

then ponding basins, and later wetlands and other claims.

The payment to landowners is based on the valuation at the time of taking by the Commonwealth.

The MPLA has listed some 120 eligible land claimants in the CNMI.

Of the \$40-million bond, only about \$27 million will be used for land compensation, as \$11 million has been allotted to fund a pending prison project. The bond's Hawaii-based underwriter also deducted \$1.5 million from the total amount for cost of the bond issuance.

The government is given 30 years to pay off the loan at an annual interest of 6.75 percent.

cars unlimited
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Good Housekeeping

Nails for a carpenter

By JEANNE MARIE LASKAS
THE WASHINGTON POST

This all started a week ago. I called Dan, my contractor, to ask him a routine question about window casing options. He wasn't home, so I left a message.

Now, Dan isn't just any old contractor. Dan is a best-kept-secret master-carpenter/dream-contractor. He is a lone angel walking amid the darkness of contractors who promise and leave, promise and leave, never call, leave you with sewage gas leaking into your attic. He is the type you watch with utter amazement as he commits all of his energy and all of his devotion to the perfect patio door installation, and you think: I am never letting go of this man.

This happened last summer as Dan went about transforming my spider hole of a kitchen into a sparkling, sun-drenched food-prep heaven. "I will never let you go," I said to him, bribing him with steaks and drawings my girls made of "Uncle Dan." I asked him to

please take on the larger job of converting our confusing old farmhouse into one that at least makes a tiny bit of logical sense. To wit: one front door instead of five. He said he would. He spent several days just staring at my house. Staring and studying and trying to figure out what the heck happened over the past century as farmer after farmer added a porch, enclosed it, added a porch, enclosed it, as the house grew ever westward.

"This house," Dan would say. "This house!" But he never gave up. He began a master plan and suggested we divide the work into smaller projects that he could do over the next few years. He said he would "put me on the schedule."

The schedule? "I am a jealous woman," I said to him, explaining that I didn't want to be on a schedule. I wanted him all to myself.

"I know," he said. "I know." I learned of the other women. I learned of a previous customer who had recently moved away, and who now was prepared to

import Dan over two state lines. I learned of her friend, who had lured Dan with a two-story addition project.

"My house needs you more than their houses need you!" I pleaded.

"I know," he said. "I know." But he had committed to them. And he assured me he was committing to me. He said he was nothing if not a loyal man. And then he was gone, returning sporadically over these past months to go over plans. Sometimes Dan would bring along his kids, who like to play here, and his wife, Jennifer, a kind and strong soul. On my birthday last fall, my husband surprised me with the gift of Jennifer, who works as a manicurist: She sat under our maple tree and did my nails and my girls' nails, never once complaining as my 4-year-old requested a drawing on each fingernail, ending with a unicorn-above-rainbow on her left pinky.

This is probably not your average contractor-customer relationship. No, this has evolved into something far more elaborate.

So naturally I was surprised last week when Dan never returned my message. I called again. Jennifer answered. "Oh, you didn't hear," she said, with exhaustion in her voice. My heart sank. She told me Dan was on a roof, slipped on some ice, got a good sliding start, then sailed 17 feet down onto a slab of cement. He broke both elbows, a wrist, maybe a shoulder, his nose, who knows what else. "I'm so ... sorry," I said. "How can I help?"

"Win the lottery?" she said. "He needs a lot of surgeries."

He's self-employed. Like all those Americans you hear politicians debate about, he has no health insurance. He'll be out of work, and in and out of hospitals, for months. How does a family absorb such a blow? "I'm going to work really hard," Jennifer said, of the manicure business she runs out of her home. "I'm going to ... increase my client base."

Dan called me the day he got out of the hospital. His broken nose made his voice unrecognizable. "I'm sorry

I didn't call you back till now," he said, ridiculously.

"Look, I want to help," I said.

"I'm going to get better," he said. "Just believe in me. That's the most help."

That was too simple. I hung up, wondered what on earth I could do. I thought about getting a manicure, maybe a French manicure, or something really elaborate. When there is an important person in your life who is suddenly in need, you'll do anything to help, wondering how come everything you think of seems so puny.

A day later I got an e-mail. A woman who said she lives two states away. The other woman! She had tracked me down. And a few of the other women, too. "We're starting a fund," she wrote, asking me to participate. "Of course!" I said, got out my checkbook, and all day I walked around thinking about the way loyalty begets loyalty.

Tomorrow I'm taking my girls over, and anyone else I can enlist. We'll get manicures and pedicures, and buy gift certificates for friends.



Fun with faucets: Look Ma, no hands

By JURA KONCIUS
THE WASHINGTON POST

Hands-free faucets, a staple of restrooms in airports, movie theaters and other public places, are now trickling into the domestic market, particularly in powder rooms and children's bathrooms.

"Since the 1970s, these faucets have been used in commercial locations because of hygiene and ease of use," says Melissa Birdsong, director of trend

forecasting and design for Lowe's home improvement stores. "As people have become comfortable with the use of hands-free technology, they started asking for it for their homes."

Although hands-free faucets such as the e-Flow line from Delta must be special-ordered at Lowe's and sell for about \$250 and up, Birdsong says, sales are on the rise. Hands-free models have caught on not only because universal design is becoming more popular, but also because manufactur-

ers have improved the installation technology. Consumers can pre-set water temperatures (including a non-scalding feature) and stylish new models are more suitable for a family bathroom than a gas station restroom.

"Now these things have a cool factor," says Birdsong. "I think they're going to become very popular as the styling, ease of use and the price reach a point of acceptability."

What about those automatic toilets? She says no rush to hands-free flush.

The latest portable desk set

By JURA KONCIUS
THE WASHINGTON POST

Between cell phones, beepers and laptops, people seem to be taking their office wherever they go. A cool metal Fold-Away Desk by Russell+Hazel is equally portable. Or it can be bolted to the wall to keep supplies handy in a home office, kitchen or wherever you set up shop—open if you want to see it all, closed when you want to put work out of mind. The 15-by-20-inch industrial gray metal surface is magnetic so it can serve as a memo board when it's closed.

Christine Plantan, founder of the stylish Minneapolis office supply company Russell+Hazel, says she

first spotted an old version of the desk at an office supply surplus store. Turns out that model has been manufactured for years for use in factories to organize time cards next to time clocks and phones.

"We ordered some and hung them on walls all over our offices," says Plantan. "We discovered it's a great place to put a laptop, especially in apartments with no room for large desks." Plantan is planning to come out soon with Fold-Aways in different colors; wouldn't one look fab in pink?

Available at www.russellandhazel.com for \$135, the desk comes equipped with cool supplies like polka dot Post-it Notes, correspondence cards, colorful magnets and pencils (888-254-5837).



Business



World

Across the Globe

Security Council sets sanctions deadline

By EDITH M. LEDERER
AP WRITER

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The Security Council set a March 31 deadline Friday for nearly 100 countries to report on their enforcement of sanctions against al-Qaida and the Taliban—or be publicly named and shamed.

A resolution adopted unanimously gives the committee monitoring sanctions new powers to assess what states are doing to implement the asset freeze, travel ban, and arms embargo against the two groups and terror leader Osama bin Laden.

The council has been concerned that nearly 100 of the 191 U.N. member states have failed to submit reports on their actions to enforce sanctions.

The resolution sets a March 31 deadline for all countries that have not submitted reports to do so, or to explain

in writing their reasons for not responding. It asks the sanctions committee to give the council a list of countries that don't comply by that date.

Chile's U.N. Ambassador Heraldo Munoz, the committee chairman, told reporters after the vote that he will publicly identify countries that don't submit a report and say whether it's a lack of political will, because of technical problems, or for some other reason.

He said earlier this month that identifying the countries not complying would be more than a matter of "naming and shaming." The council must also close loopholes, adopt tougher measures, and stress to countries that enforcing sanctions is mandatory, he said.

"I think there's a strong message to countries to comply," said Munoz, who is also this month's Security Council president.

The resolution reiterates "the urgency for all states to comply with their existing obligations" to implement sanctions and to ensure that their domestic laws and administrative measures allow assets to be frozen, travel to be banned, and arms shipments to be halted.

It calls on states "to move vigorously and decisively to cut the flows of funds and other financial assets and economic resources to individuals and entities associated with the al-Qaida organization, Osama bin Laden and/or the Taliban."

This should be done by implementing internationally accepted standards for combating the financing of terrorism, including preventing the abuse of non-profit organizations, it said.

The Security Council shifted sanctions from the government of

Afghanistan to bin Laden, al-Qaida and remnants of the Taliban in January 2002, after a U.S.-led force ousted the Taliban.

U.N. sanctions require all nations to impose a travel ban and an arms embargo and freeze the assets of individuals and groups on a list issued by the sanctions committee.

While 4,000 individuals linked to al-Qaida and the Taliban have been detained in over 102 countries, the U.N. list of individuals and entities subject to sanctions has just 398 names.

The resolution urges all states to provide names for the list.

U.S. deputy ambassador James Cunningham said the resolution supports Munoz' efforts to improve the enforcement of sanctions.

"The original resolution set up a good set of measures," he said. "We

want to see if we can improve how those are implemented, and we'll then look whether there are further steps that we or others can propose to the council to strengthen the (sanctions) regime as a whole."

To assist the sanctions committee, the resolution establishes a New York-based monitoring team for 18 months. Secretary-General Kofi Annan is asked to consult with the committee and appoint eight members to the team with expertise ranging from financing terrorism to arms embargoes and the use of couriers and alternative remittance systems.

The resolution calls for the team to deliver its first report to the committee on implementation of sanctions by the 191 U.N. member states by July 31, its second by Dec. 15, 2005 and its third by June 30, 2005.

Audit finds billions in China misused

SHANGHAI, China (AP)—Audits aimed at ferreting out corruption in China uncovered \$8 billion in misused or embezzled funds and widespread irregularities that produced "serious losses" of state assets, the government said Friday.

Auditors investigated 130,000 state businesses and offices last year as part of the communist leadership's campaign against the pervasive graft that has soured public faith in the government.

Li Jinhua, minister of the State Auditing Administration, told officials attending a national conference Friday that government auditors found larger-

than-reported losses in the accounts of the State Power Corp., the former national power monopoly that was dismantled last year.

Irregularities at the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China - one of the country's biggest state-owned banks—included housing and auto loans granted to organizations or individuals using false documents and excessive lending to local governments, Li said in an account posted on the audit office's Web site.

The bank suffered "serious losses" from illegal loans granted by staff and related companies, it said without giving figures. The report also cited a "big

batch" of major economic crimes but did not elaborate.

Li has long criticized officials for diverting government subsidies and spending lavishly on offices, private villas and stock speculation, among other abuses.

As a result of the audits, \$2.9 billion of the \$8 billion in misused funds were returned to the government, and the cases of 749 officials were referred to prosecutors for criminal investigations, the audit office said.

In recent months, thousands of Chinese officials and managers of state companies have been punished in a renewed effort to root out rampant abuse of power.

Envoy hopeful about N. Korea talks

BEIJING (AP)—A top U.S. diplomat praised China on Friday for its efforts to reconvene negotiations about North Korea's nuclear program, expressing hope that a new round of six-party talks to resolve the dispute could be held without much further delay.

But after a day of meeting with Chinese leaders, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage wouldn't cite a potential date for the talks, saying only that Washington and Beijing expect they would be "soon."

The decision on when talks would be resumed "seems to lie in Pyongyang rather than Beijing," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Friday, referring to the North Korean government.

"We are working with our partners in these talks to try to prepare another round," Boucher said. But "sitting down at the table again requires the consent of Pyongyang."

The first round ended in August without a settlement or a date to meet

again. The talks involve the United States, China, Japan, Russia and the two Koreas.

An Australian government delegation was on its way to North Korea on Friday to persuade Pyongyang to agree to a second round, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said. Australia, a close U.S. ally, has diplomatic links with North Korea.

"A constructive, diplomatic solution to North Korea's nuclear crisis, which escalated just over a year ago, is vital for the security of our region and stability in North Asia and among our allies and top trading partners," said Downer, who was leading the delegation, which will be in Pyongyang until Tuesday.

The nuclear dispute flared in October 2002 when U.S. officials accused North Korea of running the uranium program in violation of a 1994 deal requiring the North to freeze its nuclear facilities. But North Korea has since denied ever having a uranium program.

Official: Plane crashes off Nigeria coast

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP)—A 25- to 30-seat passenger plane plunged into the Atlantic Ocean off Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital, on Friday, an airport official and witnesses said.

There was no sign of any survivors, victims or wreckage. It was unclear how many people were aboard the aircraft.

Air traffic control was trying to determine the origin of the plane, which disappeared beneath the waves, the official at Lagos international airport said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The plane went down along a

busy east-west commercial West African flight path that is also used by multinational oil companies to fly workers to and from facilities in Nigeria's oil delta. No airline reported any planes missing.

Police called for divers to search the seas for survivors, but those plans collapsed because for lack of diving equipment. Fishermen offered to help but later refused when they were told they would not be paid.

A witness, security supervisor Kelvin Ikpeme, said he saw a white,

yellow and blue twin-engine plane "shaking" and wobbling in the sky shortly before the crash.

"I rushed down here and saw smoke. Only the nose was still above the water," Ikpeme said.

The craft soon vanished off Lekki, a neighborhood on the eastern edge of Lagos, Ikpeme and other witnesses said.

A Lagos state official, Leke Pitan, said time had run out to find survivors.

"We're no longer thinking about a rescue. Now we're thinking about a recovery operation," Pitan said.

Bystanders run away as a police helicopter tries to land on a beach, near where a small plane crashed into the ocean, in Lagos, Nigeria, Friday Jan. 30, 2004.

AP



Life & Style

Movies that are opening this month

FEBRUARY 6:



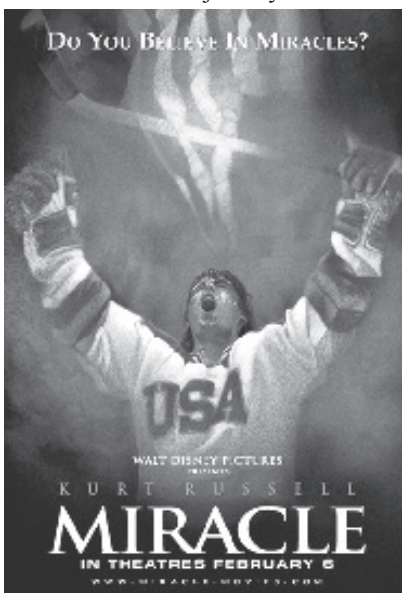
□ "Barbershop 2: Back in Business," the sequel to the 2002 hit, brings back Ice Cube and Cedric the Entertainer and introduces Queen Latifah as the new barber to watch.



□ "Catch That Kid," an Americanized remake of a successful Danish caper, is about a young girl (Kristen Stewart) who enlists two friends to help her rob a bank so she can pay for her ailing father's operation.



□ "Crimson Gold," by Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami, follows the course of events that caused a pizza delivery man to kill the owner of a jewelry store.



□ "Miracle," as in "Miracle on Ice," is inspired by the U.S. hockey team, led by Herb Brooks (Kurt Russell), that persevered over the Russians in the 1980 Winter Olympics. • "Japanese Story," by Sue Brooks, is about a Down Under cross-country journey that turns into romance between an Australian geologist (Toni Colette) and a Japanese businessman.



□ "Tokyo Godfathers," a Japanese anime film from Satoshi Kon, is about a transvestite, a young girl and a middle-aged homeless guy who find a baby in the trash and try to track down its mother.

FEBRUARY 13:



□ "Aileen: Life and Death of a Serial Killer" is Nick Broomfield's second documentary about Aileen Wuornos, the murderer portrayed in the recent movie "Monster."

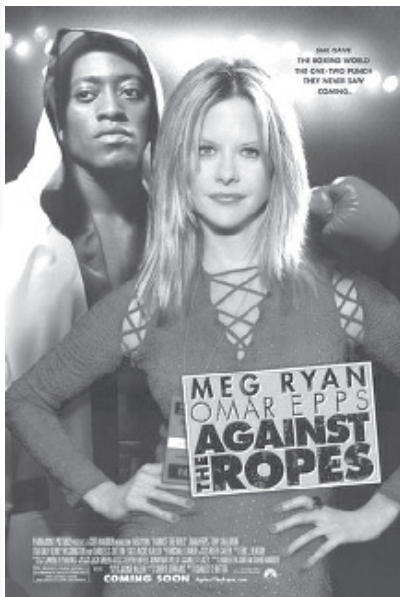
□ "The Dreamers," in which the 1968 Paris student riots and a mutual love of cinema bring together a young man from America with a Frenchman and his sister, amounts to a second sexy tangle in Paris for filmmaker Bernardo Bertolucci. Fox Searchlight elected to retain the NC-17 rating slapped on this movie's backside.

□ "50 First Dates" is another Adam Sandler-Drew Barrymore comedy (they were together in "The Wedding Singer"); Barrymore's short-term memory loss makes



her keep forgetting she's in love with Sandler. He has to remind her every time she sees him.

FEBRUARY 20:



□ "Against the Ropes," based on the real-life female boxing manager Jackie Kallen, stars Meg Ryan as Jackie, and Omar Epps as one of the many boxers she guides to ring glory.

□ "Welcome to Mooseport" stars Gene Hackman as a former president who settles down for retirement in a New England town, only to find himself running for mayor against the local hardware store guy.



□ "Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen," based on the young-adult novel, follows a Greenwich Village girl (Lindsay Lohan) who suffers culture shock when her parents move to the 'burbs.

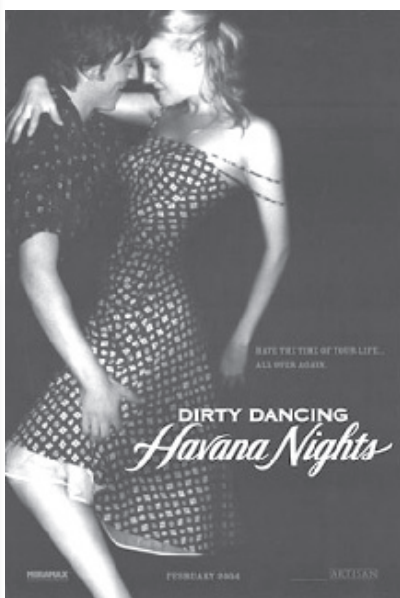
FEBRUARY 25:



(James Caviezel).

□ "The Passion of the Christ," or the Scripture according to Mel Gibson, is a no-holds-barred account of the last mortal day of Jesus

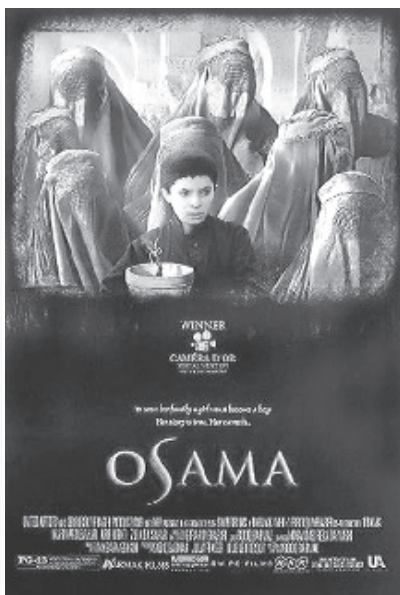
FEBRUARY 27:



□ "Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights," trying to rekindle that summer-camp-romance heat of 1987's "Dirty Dancing," is set on the eve of revolution in Cuba with two newcomers (Romola Garai and Diego Luna of "Y Tu Mama Tambien") as the dancer-lovers and, yes, Patrick Swayze in a cameo.

□ "How to Draw A Bunny," a documentary by John Walter, is about New York artist Ray Johnson.

□ "Twisted," a murder thriller directed by Philip Kaufman, stars Ashley Judd as a detective who has to find out why her ex-boyfriends are being killed.



□ "Osama," the first post-Taliban Afghan film, depicts the hardships of a young girl forced to disguise herself as a boy (named Osama) in order to get work in the draconian world run by the Taliban.

Heroic kids and a biking chimp

By KEVIN THOMAS
LOS ANGELES TIMES

"Moto X Kids" opens with a daredevil supercross competition in an arena with an elaborate, hilly earthen course constructed for the event, which is handily won by young Callie Reed (Alana Austin), who profoundly disappoints her coach father, Evan (Lorenzo Lamas), when she announces she's retiring to enter medical school.

Evan has little time to brood because he's received an emergency call from his own onetime motocross coach Bear Madigan (Dan Haggerty) with the news that the Pirates, a bunch of middle-aged guys who pretend they're real bikers, led by the nasty Viper (Gary Busey), is on the verge of foreclosing on Bear's ranch, a combination wildlife habitat and training ground for children eager to become supercross contenders. Evan comes up with the \$100,000 to save the ranch—a day too late. (Wasn't Roy Rogers or Gene Autry always saving someone's ranch from the bad guys?)

That's when Bear's three young pupils (Josh Hutcherson, Alexa Nikolas and Bobby Preston) take action: They confront Viper at his bar and propose that the three of them go up against Viper's young son Spike (Wayne Dalglish) and two other young motocrossers. Whoever wins the competition walks off with the ranch.

There's soon a catch: Hutcherson's T.J., the most promising of Bear's proteges, breaks his arm, and Evan, Bear and Callie, who also wants to help, have no recourse but to replace T.J. with Bear's chimpanzee, Cody. Lest this seem a bit of a stretch, Callie early on remarked to her father, "You could teach a monkey to do what I do."

"Moto X Kids" plays just fine for its intended audience of children, although some parents may find Michael Gannon's script does not bear close scrutiny, even if they accept the idea of young kids taking part in motocross. When Viper's lieutenant Mongo and the other Pirates start threatening Bear, why doesn't he send his three little charges home to keep them out of harm's way? But the way the movie plays out, of course, allows the children to emerge as heroes.

Under the direction of Richard Gabai, who wisely keeps things simple and brisk, Lamas, Austin and Haggerty come across as likable pros, and the film's youngsters are appealing. As Evan's frustrated business manager, Phyllis Diller is sharper than her material.

Jackson friend criticizes article

By LINDA DEUTSCH
AP SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A friend of Michael Jackson's family said they are outraged by a magazine article out this week that portrays the embattled singer negatively.

Firpo Carr told a news conference outside the Jackson family home Friday that the entertainer's parents and siblings object to a Vanity Fair magazine story about the current child-molestation charges against Jackson and similar allegations 10 years ago that were never prosecuted.

"We find it curious that this article appears when Michael's legal team cannot respond to this yellow journalism because of a gag order," Carr said.

The article did not contain a response from Jackson's family or legal team, although it said the writer had attempted to get their side.

All parties involved in Jackson's legal case remain under a gag order and cannot speak publicly about it.

Carr said the story contains false statements and allegations that were not attributed.

Regarding claims in the story that Jackson has had drug prob-



Firpo Carr, a friend of Michael Jackson's family, speaks to reporters outside the Jackson compound in the Encino area of Los Angeles, Friday, Jan. 30, 2004.

lems, Carr said it was well documented that after a 1984 accident Jackson was given painkillers, became addicted to them and went into rehabilitation for a time to get off the drug.

The magazine issued a one-sentence statement affirming its story:

"Vanity Fair stands by Maureen Orth's Michael Jackson story. The article underwent rigorous fact-checking and legal vetting."

Carr, who said he has known the Jackson family for about 10 years but was speaking as a private citizen, said the public should re-

member that Jackson is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Jackson pleaded not guilty earlier this month to seven counts of lewd or lascivious acts with a child under 14 and two counts of giving the child an "intoxicating agent," reportedly wine.

Boyfriend's mockery is no laughing matter

By AVIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating a man I'll call Ben for five months. He recently quit his job to go back to school full time (he's 29), and I support him financially. Things were fine until he started hanging out with some college kids who live next door to us.

When Ben and I are alone or around his adult friends, things are fine. But when he gets around these fellow students, which is often, Ben mocks me in front of them. For example, when I go next door to tell him dinner is ready, he'll start making fun of me in a really embarrassing and juvenile way.

I know it may be fun for him to relive his college days, but being made to look like a fool in front of his buddies is starting to wear thin.

I have discussed this with him. He insists that he's just playing around (even though I wind up in tears), and says that I'm too controlling, this is his only life, and he's only having fun.

Is this something he's going to grow out of?

TIRED OF BEING THE JOKE



Dear Abby

DEAR TIRED: Not without help. What you're describing isn't immaturity; it's hostility. You say you are supporting him while he attends school full time. Perhaps the burden of gratitude has grown uncomfortably heavy, so he's taking it out on you and trying to make himself look less dependent in front of his schoolmates. He could also be using you. Regardless of his motive, he is showing disregard for your feelings. Put your foot down now or it will get worse.

DEAR ABBY: My parents and my older brother, "Mike," cannot get along. To make matters worse, my sister-in-law, "Janice," is holding the children for ransom from my parents until they resolve their differences with Mike.

Abby, my parents have tried many times to reconcile, but it always blows up into a huge argument where nothing is resolved.

My sister and I feel stuck in the middle. Since my parents are denied their grandchildren, I feel guilty for having a relationship with my nieces and nephew.

They are all so stubborn, and it's tearing our family apart. What can I do?

STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

DEAR STUCK: Why should your nieces and nephew lose their aunts because of the inability of the parents and grandparents to make peace in the family? Please don't make your parents' problems your own. Forget the guilt and see the children.

DEAR ABBY: My husband has been supporting a man for the last nine months. So far he has given him a house, a \$6,000 truck and has paid all of his bills.

I went away for a week, and when I came back, I found this man in my house. What do I do?

WONDERING IN UTAH

DEAR WONDERING: First, ask your husband what his relationship is with this man, and why he is being so generous. Does he owe this person a debt? Are they lovers? If his answers don't satisfy you, consult a lawyer before all the assets are depleted.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)



Reba McEntire to host Country Music Awards

Reba McEntire will be back on familiar turf as host of the 39th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards.

This will be the third consecutive ceremony—and seventh overall—to feature the singer-actress as host. The awards show is set for May 26 at the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino in Las Vegas and will air on CBS.

McEntire, who appeared on Broadway in a revival of "Annie Get Your Gun," stars in the WB sitcom "Reba." She released "Room to Breathe," her first new album in four years, last November.

She is the all-time leading winner in the ceremony's top female vocalist category. (AP)

Crowe injured on movie set

Russell Crowe dislocated his shoulder in Sydney, Australia, while training for a boxing scene in his upcoming film "Cinderella Man," Universal Pictures said Friday.

He'll immediately undergo arthroscopic repair surgery followed by physical therapy, the studio added. That should delay the start of filming by about one month, from early March to April.

The movie, about Depression-era boxer and folk hero Jim Braddock, co-stars Renee Zellweger and will be directed by Ron Howard, who previously collaborated with Crowe on the Oscar-winning "A Beautiful Mind."



Crowe

"I've never known any actor who dedicates himself to a part with more intensity than Russell," stated Brian Grazer, producer of "Cinderella Man." "Russell has been training with

some of the foremost boxing instructors in the world, and that commitment is what led to the injury to his shoulder."

Crowe, who has had physically demanding roles in such films as "Gladiator" and "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World," injured the same shoulder while training for the upcoming Jodie Foster-directed film "Flora Plum." He eventually had to drop out of that role.

"Rings" receives 11 Oscar nominations

The previous repair to the shoulder remains intact, Universal said, and the new injury is on a different area of the shoulder. (AP)

Kid Rock roots for the Patriots

Kid Rock was in Houston to promote his part in the Super Bowl XXXVIII halftime show and said he was leaning toward backing the New England Patriots.

"I was actually going through my closet yesterday, and I found a Patriots jersey with 'Kid Rock' sewn on the back. It's kind of tough for me because

I do have some strong connections to Carolina. But for some reason that red, white and blue just kind of gets me on the Patriots. So I'm kind of swinging that way," he said Thursday.

The Detroit rocker appeared at a news conference with fellow halftime performers Nelly and P. Diddy. He said he was leaving Houston for two con-

certs in other states, returning Sunday for his performance at Reliant Stadium, the Detroit Free Press reported.

Kid Rock was asked whether he would spend some of his limited time in Houston promoting the Motor City, which hosts the Super Bowl in 2006.

"Always," he responded. "When haven't I?" (AP)

R. Kelly's lawyers want photos suppressed

Lawyers for R. Kelly have asked a judge in his child pornography case to suppress nude pictures found on a digital camera, saying they were seized during an illegal search of the singer's home.

The 37-year-old R&B star is charged with charged with 12 counts of child pornography. He's also awaiting trial on child pornography charges in

Chicago from a videotape that allegedly shows him having sex with an underage girl.

Kelly's attorney, Ron Toward, argued prosecutors shouldn't be allowed to use pictures found on a digital camera in Kelly's Davenport home, about 35 miles southwest of Orlando. Authorities say they show Kelly engaged in sexual activity with a minor.

Using a warrant to search for

drugs, a Polk County Sheriff's detective found a camera, wrapped in a towel, inside a duffel bag. Police later got a warrant to search for child pornography.

But Toward argued in last week's motion that Detective Robert Mateo didn't mention in his probable cause affidavit for a child pornography search warrant that he'd already seen the pictures. (AP)



Henin-Hardenne wins Australian Open

By JOHN PYE
AP SPORTS WRITER



MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Justine Henin-Hardenne won her third Grand Slam title and extended her dominance in major finals against Kim Clijsters with a 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 win in Saturday's Australian Open women's title match.

Henin-Hardenne consistently beat Clijsters with one-fisted backhand shots, extending her unbeaten streak against her fellow Belgian to three Grand Slam finals. The victory assured Henin-Hardenne of keeping her No. 1 ranking.

"It was really emotional, both of us were really nervous," Henin-Hardenne said. "I have three Grand Slam titles now, it's wonderful."

Retaining the top ranking "wasn't my main goal today, just winning this Grand Slam," she said. "So it's two big things in a day."

Henin-Hardenne, who beat Clijsters to win the 2003 French Open and U.S. Open titles, broke in the second and fourth games of the deciding set.

Clijsters broke back at 1-4, held and then got back on serve with a backhand winner down the line.

She had two game points while trying to level the set at 4-4, but double-faulted both times.

Clijsters sent a backhand volley out to give Henin-Hardenne a break point and then smacked a swinging forehand that was originally called good at the baseline, but chair umpire Sandra De Jenken of France overruled and called it out after Henin-Hardenne complained.

TV replays appeared to show the ball barely catching the line.

Henin-Hardenne, serving at 5-3, closed it out in 1 hour, 47 minutes with a first serve that Clijsters couldn't return.

"I just tried to stay focused on every point. But game after game, I was feeling more nervous," Henin-Hardenne said. "I'm not afraid of anyone, but sometimes I'm afraid of myself. The mental part is very important."

"Being stronger physically helps, and being stronger in my head."

After match point, she spun her racket in the air and slumped to her knees, crouching with both hands over her face. She stood up and raised both arms in the air before meeting and kissing Clijsters at the net.

She walked back onto the court with both arms raised triumphantly. Both women were in the Australian Open final for the first time and it was Henin-Hardenne's third major title in the last four Grand Slams. Wimbledon now stands as the only major title she hasn't won.

To clear that final hurdle, Henin-Hardenne said she has to improve her grass court game to match the power of the Williams sisters. Serena Williams, the 2003 Australian Open champion, didn't recover from a knee operation in time to defend the title and Venus Williams, coming back from six months off with recurring abdominal muscle problems, was upset in the third round.

Clijsters is 0-4 in Grand Slam finals, 0-3 against Henin-Hardenne and 0-1 against Jennifer Capriati (2001 French Open).

"I want to congratulate Kim for a wonderful tournament," Henin-Hardenne said. "She



Justine Henin-Hardenne of Belgium holds the winners trophy after she defeated Kim Clijsters also of Belgium to win the women's final at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia, Saturday, Jan. 31, 2004.

wasn't sure she could play and she did and she fought a lot, so congratulations for this unbelievable tournament."

Clijsters injured her left ankle at the Hopman Cup three weeks ago and was a questionable starter at Melbourne Park. She was bothered by the ankle problem in two previous matches, but showed no

signs of pain in the final.

"I think she played a great final and in the end she was too good, so well done," Clijsters said. "This has been an incredible two weeks for me, 2 1/2 weeks ago I didn't think I'd be able to play."

Clijsters and Henin-Hardenne have been friends since

junior tournaments. They have split 18 matches on tour, but Henin-Hardenne leads 3-2 in Grand Slam matches and 3-0 in finals at majors.

Henin-Hardenne appeared to be in complete control after taking the first set 6-3 and going up 4-2 in the second. But Clijsters ran off the next four games to

take the second set 6-4, the first Henin-Hardenne dropped in the tournament. The opening set was the first Clijsters had lost in the tournament.

As the fiancée of Australia's Lleyton Hewitt, Clijsters clearly had the packed center-court crowd behind her.

She was first on court after every changeover. Henin-Hardenne spent as much time as possible in the shade behind the baseline, slowing down her opponent's momentum.

Henin-Hardenne pulled ahead 4-2 in the second set as Clijsters, serving at deuce, hit a backhand crosscourt wide to set up break point. Henin-Hardenne then nailed a backhand pass down the line.

But Clijsters broke back in the next game, then held to level the set at 4-4.

After Henin-Hardenne got herself into trouble with her second double-fault at 30-30 in the next game, Clijsters hit a good forehand deep in the corner that Henin-Hardenne returned long to give Clijsters a 5-4 edge.

Clijsters fended off one break point in the next game at 30-40, and won the game and the set when Henin-Hardenne netted a serve return.

Just before the match, officials opened the roof over Rod Laver Arena after early morning rain cleared.

Henin-Hardenne finished with 30 winners and 38 unforced errors. Clijsters had 12 winners and 43 unforced errors, winning points only half of the 28 times she went to the net.

In the later men's doubles final, defending champions Michael Llodra and Fabrice Santoro of France were against top-seeded Bob and Mike Bryan.

Belichick, Fox brief in last media session

By BOB BAUM
AP SPORTS WRITER



HOUSTON (AP)—Bill Belichick had no time to think about his place in NFL history. John Fox couldn't wait to get out of the room, his final pre-Super Bowl session with the media.

The coaches of the New England Patriots and Carolina Panthers—not a jovial, gregarious pair to begin with—were even more all-business than usual on Friday.

With six days of questions from the media mob in Houston finally at an end, the teams retreated to complete preparations for Sunday's kickoff in relative calm.

With a New England victory on Sunday, Belichick would join an elite group of coaches whose teams had won more than one Super Bowl. If it happens, Belichick might think about it.

"Right now I don't think this is any time for reflection on anything," he said. "I think this is time for performance. This is the biggest game of the year."

Fox left the podium eight minutes into what was supposed to be a 30-minute session. There seemed to be no more questions. If there were, the Carolina coach wasn't about to stick around to hear them.

Belichick's Patriots, on a 14-game winning streak, are seven-point favorites to win their second Super Bowl in three seasons. Fox took the Panthers to their first Super Bowl in his second season after inheriting a 1-15 squad.

At their news conferences, the coaches stood next to the Lombardi Trophy, to be presented to Sunday's champion.

"I think what that stands for is the team that played the most consistent, toughest, smartest football for that season," Belichick said.

Fox remembered what he thought when the Ravens won the trophy in 2001, while he was defensive coordinator for the New York Giants.

"Some day I'd like to find out what it's like to get there," he said.

The day before each game, Fox has someone deliver a motivational talk to the players. This Saturday will be no different, but the identity of the speaker is a mystery.

"I don't really let that out, who it's going to be," he said. "In fact, I even play little games to keep it away from the players."

He ruled out linebacker Mark Fields and linebackers coach Sam Mills, who both are fighting cancer.

"It won't be Mark or Sam because they've already done it before this year," Fox said. "They'll both be there, and obviously they're an inspiration to the whole football team. But it will be somebody else."

Belichick was glad to have two weeks between the conference championship and the Super Bowl.

"I think we're ready to go," he said. "Certainly there's a lot to get ready for. Carolina has an extensive scheme, and they're very good at what they do."

New England's defense shut down the prolific passing game of Peyton Manning and the Indianapolis Colts in the AFC championship game. Now the Patriots face an offense that could hardly be more different - one that pounds away with running backs Stephen Davis and DeShaun Foster, to set up big passing plays for Jake Delhomme.

"The backs are productive and they're efficient," Belichick said. "But this has been a big passing game all year, with the decision-making that Jake has, the ability to throw the ball downfield."

With a tough defense, especially along the line, Carolina's



Carolina Panthers coach John Fox, left, and New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick talk with reporters during separate news conferences in Houston on Friday, Jan. 30, 2004. The Patriots against and the Panthers face-off in Super Bowl XXXVIII on Sunday, Feb. 1, in Houston.

plan is to keep the score low, and chew up time on offense.

"We want to be able to develop a running game, make you commit extra people to that running game, so we can do the second part that coach Belichick said, and that's hit you with big plays," Fox said. "And I think that's probably the image we're trying to be."

Belichick's reputation is that of a defensive genius, one that can shut down any offense.

Fox counters with a team he quickly transformed from chumps to champs by emphasizing toughness.

"The moment of truth for the whole year," Belichick said, "is right here in one game."

Hamilton's late rally helps Pistons defeat Raptors

TORONTO (AP)—Richard Hamilton scored all eight of Detroit's points in overtime and Ben Wallace blocked two shots in the final five seconds as the Pistons beat the Toronto Raptors 90-89.

Vince Carter sent the game Friday into overtime with a 3-pointer and gave Toronto a three-point lead with 1:01 left in the extra period, but Hamilton followed with a driving layup and two free throws, giving Detroit a 90-89 lead with 23 seconds remaining.

"We got down by three and Richard made some unbelievable plays," Detroit coach Larry Brown said. "And Ben made huge plays defensively."

Toronto's Alvin Williams and Chris Bosh both missed jumpers before Wallace blocked Morris Peterson's shot attempt with five-seconds left. The Raptors won the ensuing jump ball, and Wallace blocked Carter's potential game-winning jumper just before the buzzer.

"It is a tough loss for our guys, a very difficult loss," Toronto coach Kevin O'Neill said.

Wallace had 18 rebounds and Hamilton finished with 28 points for the Pistons.

Wizards 105, Suns 100

In Washington, Larry Hughes scored 13 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter when the Washington rallied from a 15-point deficit to beat Phoenix.

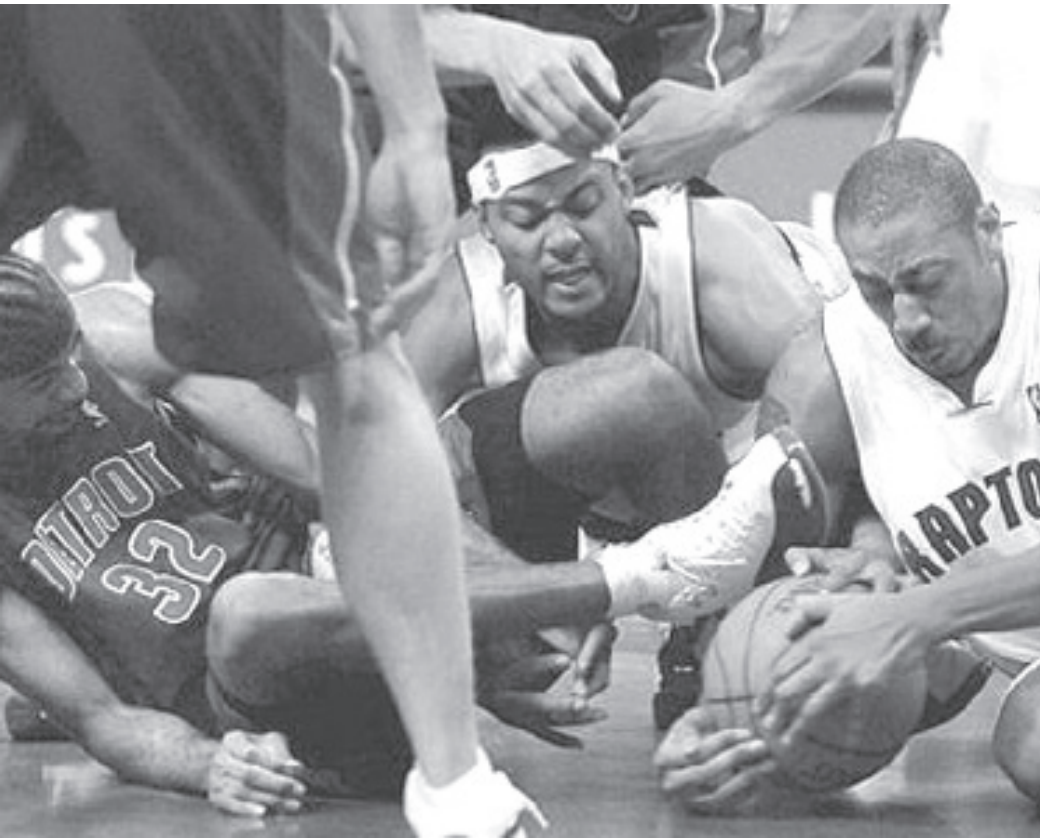
Hughes scored seven points in a 15-0 run that tied the game, and his 3-pointer with 1:12 remaining put Washington ahead by four. Steve Blake scored eight of his 13 points in the fourth quarter for the Wizards, who grabbed a season-high 59 rebounds but also committed 25 turnovers and missed 19 free throws.

The Wizards improved to 2-2 on a seven-game homestand, their longest of the season. Phoenix is 1-3 on its East Coast swing, which ends Saturday at New York.

Joe Johnson tied a career-high with 28 points for Phoenix.

76ers 85, Hornets 82

In Philadelphia, Aaron McKie hit a pair of jumpers in the final



Detroit Pistons' Richard Hamilton, left, and Toronto Raptors' Morris Peterson, center, and Donyell Marshall struggle for a loose ball during overtime NBA action in Toronto, Friday Jan. 30, 2004.

1:35, and Allen Iverson returned to the Philadelphia lineup after missing two games with a sprained finger and had 31 points and eight assists to beat New Orleans.

Kenny Thomas added 13 points and 14 rebounds for Philadelphia, which snapped a four-game losing streak. Samuel Dalembert and Glenn Robinson both finished with 11 points.

Jamal Mashburn scored 20 points as the Hornets had their three-game winning streak snapped. Baron Davis added 19, Jamaal Magloire had 13 and P.J. Brown 12.

Knicks 92, Celtics 74

In Boston, Stephon Marbury scored 17 points and Michael Doleac added 15 as New York handed Boston its second straight loss under interim coach John Carroll.

New York, which was swept by the Celtics the past two seasons, has won all three games against Boston this season. The Celtics lost for the seventh time in nine games.

Shandon Anderson and Keith Van Horn had 16 apiece and Dikembe Mutombo finished with 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Knicks, who were without starting guard Allan Houston (sore knee).

Mark Blount scored a career-high 22 points with 11 rebounds for Boston.

Heat 97, Clippers 88

In Miami, Lamar Odom had 25 points and 14 rebounds against his former team, and Rafer Alston secured the victory on a 3-pointer with 1:14 remaining as Miami beat the Los Angeles Clippers.

Odom, who scored eight points in the final quarter, also had 14 rebounds.

Elton Brand had 23 points and 15 rebounds for the Clippers, who began a nine-game road trip. Los Angeles won't return home until after the All-Star break when it plays host to Boston on Feb. 19.

Jazz 85, Grizzlies 79

In Memphis, Tennessee, Andrei Kirilenko had 21 points as Utah outrebounded Memphis 44-26 to win their third straight game.

Kirilenko, who was 3-for-4 from 3-point range, also had nine rebounds while Greg Ostertag had seven and Jarron Collins and Mikki Moore had six each.

Pau Gasol, the Grizzlies leading scorer and rebounder, was held to 10 points and two rebounds.

James Posey led Memphis

with 24 points and Bonzi Wells, who made his first start since joining the Grizzlies last month, had 14.

Bucks 101, Cavaliers 95

In Milwaukee, Michael Redd scored 24 points to give Milwaukee a win over Cleveland in former Bucks coach George Karl's first trip back to the Bradley Center.

The big attraction for the sellout crowd of 18,717 was the first visit to Milwaukee by Cleveland rookie LeBron James, who missed three straight free throws in the final minute to scuttle what might have been a close finish.

James finished with 20 points, and Carlos Boozer added 19.

Redd led six Bucks in double figures as Milwaukee won for the 14th time in its last 15 home games. Milwaukee improved to 19-5 at home, best in the Eastern Conference.

Warriors 101, Bulls 81

In Oakland, California, Speedy Claxton, Jason Richardson and Mike Dunleavy scored 15 points each Golden State's to beat Chicago.

Erick Dampier had 13 points and 10 rebounds in limited play-

ing time, and Calbert Cheaney added 13 points as seven Warriors scored in double figures in their fifth straight home win over Chicago.

Jamal Crawford scored 16 points for the Bulls, who barely contended in their ninth loss in 10 games—and their seventh straight road loss. At 13-34, Chicago is a half-game ahead of Orlando for last place overall in the NBA.

Timberwolves 97, Lakers 84

In Los Angeles, Latrell Sprewell scored 35 points and Sam Cassell added 28 as Minnesota won for the 21st time in its last 26 games.

The Wolves improved the NBA's best road record to 17-8 by outscoring Lakers 32-18 in the fourth quarter. Cassell had 16 points and made all eight of his free throw attempts in the final period.

Cassell also had 11 assists, and Kevin Garnett had 20 points and 11 rebounds.

Shaquille O'Neal scored 22 points for the Lakers, who dropped to 7-11 without the injured Karl Malone. Kareem Rush added 17 points, including two 3-pointers in the fourth quarter, starting in the place of injured Kobe Bryant.

Tribune Sports Scores

NBA STANDINGS					Dakota St. 89, Valley City St. 70 Dickinson St. 92, Mary 83 Jamestown 87, Minot St. 79 Milwaukee Engineering 63, Marian, Wis. 50 Monmouth, Ill. 86, Ripon 85 N. Dakota St. 83, North Dakota 58 Northern St., S.D. 87, Wayne, Neb. 73 Northwestern, Minn. 69, Crown 64 Shawnee St. 55, Walsh 49 Si Tanka-Huron 90, Mayville St. 62 Simpson, Iowa 88, Upper Iowa 64 Southwest St., Minn. 79, Minn.-Moorhead 67 St. Scholastica 82, North Central 81
EASTERN CONFERENCE					
Atlantic Division					
	W	L	Pct	GB	
New Jersey	24	20	.545	—	
Boston	22	26	.458	4	
New York	21	27	.438	5	
Miami	20	27	.426	5 1-2	
Philadelphia	20	27	.426	5 1-2	
Washington	14	31	.311	10 1-2	
Orlando	13	35	.271	13	
Central Division					
Indiana	34	13	.723	—	
Detroit	31	16	.660	3	
Milwaukee	26	20	.565	7 1-2	
New Orleans	26	20	.565	7 1-2	
Toronto	21	23	.477	11 1-2	
Cleveland	17	29	.370	16 1-2	
Atlanta	14	33	.298	20	
Chicago	13	34	.277	21	
WESTERN CONFERENCE					
Midwest Division					
Minnesota	32	13	.711	—	
Dallas	29	17	.630	3 1-2	
San Antonio	30	18	.625	3 1-2	
Houston	26	19	.578	6	
Denver	27	21	.563	6 1-2	
Memphis	25	20	.556	7	
Utah	24	22	.522	8 1-2	
Pacific Division					
Sacramento	32	12	.727	—	
L.A. Lakers	27	16	.628	4 1-2	
Seattle	22	22	.500	10	
Portland	20	24	.455	12	
Golden State	20	25	.444	12 1-2	
L.A. Clippers	19	25	.432	13	
Phoenix	17	31	.354	17	
MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL					
EAST					
Army 52, Navy 50					
Brockport 62, Cortland St. 56					
Bucknell 61, Colgate 53					
Clarkson 85, Hamilton 80					
Columbia 78, Dartmouth 42					
Cornell 91, Harvard 79					
Hilbert 81, Keuka 67					
Iona 70, Canisius 66					
Lafayette 86, American U. 83, OT					
Lehigh 63, Holy Cross 53					
Lehman 90, CCNY 72					
Manhattan 65, Niagara 62					
Middlebury 73, Colby 64					
Nazareth, N.Y. 60, Hartwick 48					
Plattsburgh 67, Fredonia St. 50					
Princeton 64, Brown 49					
Rochester 68, Washington, Mo. 47					
Skidmore 60, Vassar 57					
St. John Fisher 84, Ithaca 80, OT					
Trinity, Conn. 87, Bates 71					
Union, N.Y. 56, RPI 48					
Utica 63, Rochester Tech 60					
Williams 82, Bowdoin 67					
Yale 54, Penn 52					
SOUTH					
Jacksonville 77, Georgia St. 75					
Kentucky Christian 83, Crown College 62					
Mercer 76, Stetson 62					
Mount Olive 65, Anderson, S.C. 62					
NYU 94, Emory 77					
MIDWEST					
Case Reserve 71, Brandeis 68					
Cent. Iowa 54, Luther 53					

SOUTHWEST	
No scores reported from the SOUTHWEST.	
FAR WEST	
No scores reported from the FAR WEST.	
SPORTS TRANSACTIONS	
MLB	
BOSTON RED SOX-Agreed to terms with DH-1B David Ortiz on a one-year contract.	
LOS ANGELES DODGERS-Agreed to terms with INF Jolbert Cabrera on a one-year contract.	
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES-Agreed to terms with RHP Vicente Padilla on a one-year contract.	
PITTSBURGH PIRATES-Agreed to terms with OF Chris Singleton on a minor league contract.	
NBA	
DALLAS MAVERICKS-Claimed F Scott Williams off waivers from the Phoenix Suns.	
LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Placed G Kobe Bryant on the injured list.	
MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES-Signed G Darrick Martin to 10-day contract.	
PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Signed F Zendon Hamilton for the remainder of the season.	
COLLEGE	
SOUTHEASTERN	CONFERENCE
SUSPENDED Vanderbilt G-F Corey Smith and South Carolina F Renaldo Balkman for one game each for fighting during a Jan. 28 game.	
NEW JERSEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE-Denied New Jersey City University its request for affiliated membership. New Jersey City University will withdraw as a full-time member effective for the 2004-2005 academic year.	
CORNELL-Named Jim Knowles football coach.	
MANSFIELD-Named Jim Shiffer football coach.	
TEXAS CHRISTIAN-Announced it will leave Conference USA and join the Mountain West Conference to begin play, in all sports, during the 2005-06 academic year.	
UNLV-Named Allison Keeley women's volleyball coach.	
WESTERN MICHIGAN-Named Tim Knox running backs coach.	

By The Associated Press

By The Associated Press

Judge rules against Bryant defense team

By JON SANCHE
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

DENVER (AP)—In a setback for Kobe Bryant, a judge ruled Friday that notes made by a victim's advocate who sat in on a police interview with the woman Bryant is accused of raping cannot be given to defense attorneys.

State District Judge Terry Ruckriegle wrote that state law provides

such strong privacy protection for communications between victims and victim advocates that he cannot even review the notes in private to determine whether they are relevant to the case.

Bryant, 25, has said he had consensual sex with the 19-year-old woman. The Los Angeles Lakers star faces four years to life in prison or 20 years to life on probation if convicted of felony sexual assault.

He is scheduled to appear in Eagle for a hearing Monday and Tuesday before Ruckriegle for arguments on his attorneys' request to throw out evidence including statements Bryant made during an interview with investigators. The defense is also seeking the woman's medical history.

The victim's advocate, whose name has not been released, sat in during a police interview of the woman on July 1, the day af-

ter the alleged attack at a resort near Vail.

The advocate made some notes later, and Ruckriegle has said the defense was particularly interested in a single sentence.

While the notes may not have stemmed from direct communication between the alleged victim and the advocate, they still were made as part of the advocate's work with the woman, the judge said.

The Week in Sports

King of the Lanes, fun runs are a blast

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO
AND SHAN SEMAN, REPORTERS

The last two weeks was a busy one for bowlers and runners on Saipan.

On Sunday and Monday, the Saipan Bowling Association held its inaugural Pepsi King of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament at the Saipan Bowling Center in Oleai.

Department of Public Safety officer Simon Manacop took home the January championship after topping a competitive field that included eventual runner-up Rusty Musca, third place Celso Agui, and fourth place Ador Dimaano.

Last January 24 then saw Saipan host the 23rd annual Saipan Half Marathon and the 18th annual 10K Fun Run. Emerging victorious in the half marathon was Japanese handicap athlete Hisashi Nagai for the men, while compatriot Sumei Kubo took the honors in the women.

Winning the 10-kilometer race, meanwhile, were Cesar Danao for the men and Akiko Hagiwara for the women.

Pool action then saw Senen Pangelinan, Larry Guerrero, and Kay Clark get the wins in Round Two's Sunday, Thursday and Tuesday tilts, respectively.



Cesar Danao receives his 10K Fun Run trophy from Miss CNMI South Pacific Olivia Tebuteb during awards ceremonies last Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside.

Marcan Aldan receives his age group medal from Tebuteb and Northern Mariana Island Track and Field Association president Kurt Barnes.



Saipan Half Marathon champ Hisashi Nagai signs to describe how he feels after winning the 23rd edition of the run.

Winners of the Saipan Half Marathon and 10K Fun Run are all smiles after getting their medals and trophies.



Pepsi King of the Lanes champion for January Simon Manacop receives his cash prize from Saipan Bowling Association officials Ador Dimaano.



Tuesday 8-Ball Fun Tournament winner Kay Clark is sandwiched by third place Jake Koshiba, left, and runner-up Raffy Arroyo.



Third place Celso Agui gets ready to bowl.



Fourth place Ador Dimaano concentrates as he begins to bowl.



Eleven-year-old Keno San Pablo was the youngest participant during the Pepsi King of the Lanes. San Pablo is trying out for SBA's youth bowling program.



Sunday 8-Ball Fun Tournament winner Senen Pangelinan is flanked by third place Boyet Sequico, left, and runner-up Dave Peter.

Pepsi King of the Lanes runner-up Rusty Musca with Dimaano.





King of the Lanes, fun runs are a blast

The last two weeks was a busy one for bowlers and runners on Saipan.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Henin-Hardenne wins Australian Open

Justine Henin-Hardenne won her third Grand Slam title and extended her dominance in major finals against Kim Clijsters with a 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 win in Saturday's Australian Open women's title match.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Siruelo conquers the greens

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

Nestor "Toto" Siruelo has always modestly described himself as a golfer with average skills.

That's why when he won the Fil-Taga Golfer of the Year Tournament last January 11, no one was more surprised than the 48-year-old operations manager of Vestcor.

"This is a very exciting time for me. Actually, it's the most fun I've had in a long time playing golf. I knew that my handicap did a lot to win the championship. But I also believe that I really played great during the championship and I deserved to win," he said.

Siruelo, by his own admission, is not really your typical championship-caliber golfer player.

In fact, the native of Iloilo, Philippines first fell in love with the sport of tennis before switching to golf some years back.

"I'm not really a good golfer. There are better golfers than me not only on Fil-Taga but also on the whole of Saipan. I used to play tennis a lot. I only started playing golf after I kind of retired from tennis. It all began with practicing my swing on the driving range. Then in 1999 I became a member of Fil-Taga and that was when I started really playing golf seriously," he said.

Going back to his victory in the two-day Fil-Taga 2003 championship held at the Marianas Country Club and Kingfisher Golf Links, Siruelo says he was very lucky and at the same blessed by emerging as the champion.

"Never in my wildest dreams that the idea

crossed my mind that I would be triumphant. I was just battling and trying to catch Ted Malaran, who was six shots ahead of me going to the final round. It was Ted's bad luck that he didn't do too well in the back nine of the second round and I was fortunate enough to make more shots in the end," he said.

Siruelo said he didn't really practice that hard after qualifying for the yearly championships following his victory in the B division of the Fil-Taga Ace Tournament last February.

He said although, he didn't really see his chances as great, a performance during one tournament made him believe more on his golf gave and ability to conquer adversity.

Siruelo revealed that during the opening round of the MCC tournament, he taught he was headed for a high score, when he triple bogeyed on the 10th hole and bogeyed the next. But rather than sulk and have his golf game blow up on his face, Siruelo collected himself and went on to finish the tournament in style.

"I really thought that if I could replicate my success in that tournament and somewhat parlay that kind of shot making at Kingfisher then I could have a shot at Golfer of the Year," he said.

Fortunately for Siruelo, he did just that and walked away with the 2003 Fil-Taga Golfer of the Year cup and the \$500 winner-take-all purse.

"I would like to thank the Fil-Taga leadership for a well organized tournament and I would like to give all the glory back to God for this blessing," he said.

As per his advise to budding golf players, Siruelo said they should just enjoy playing the sport and be serious at the same time.



MARK RABAGO/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nestor "Toto" Siruelo, second from right, with his golf buddies after a tournament last year. Siruelo raises his 2003 Fil-Taga Golfer of the Year championship Cup during awards celebrations at Angela's Diner last January 11, above.